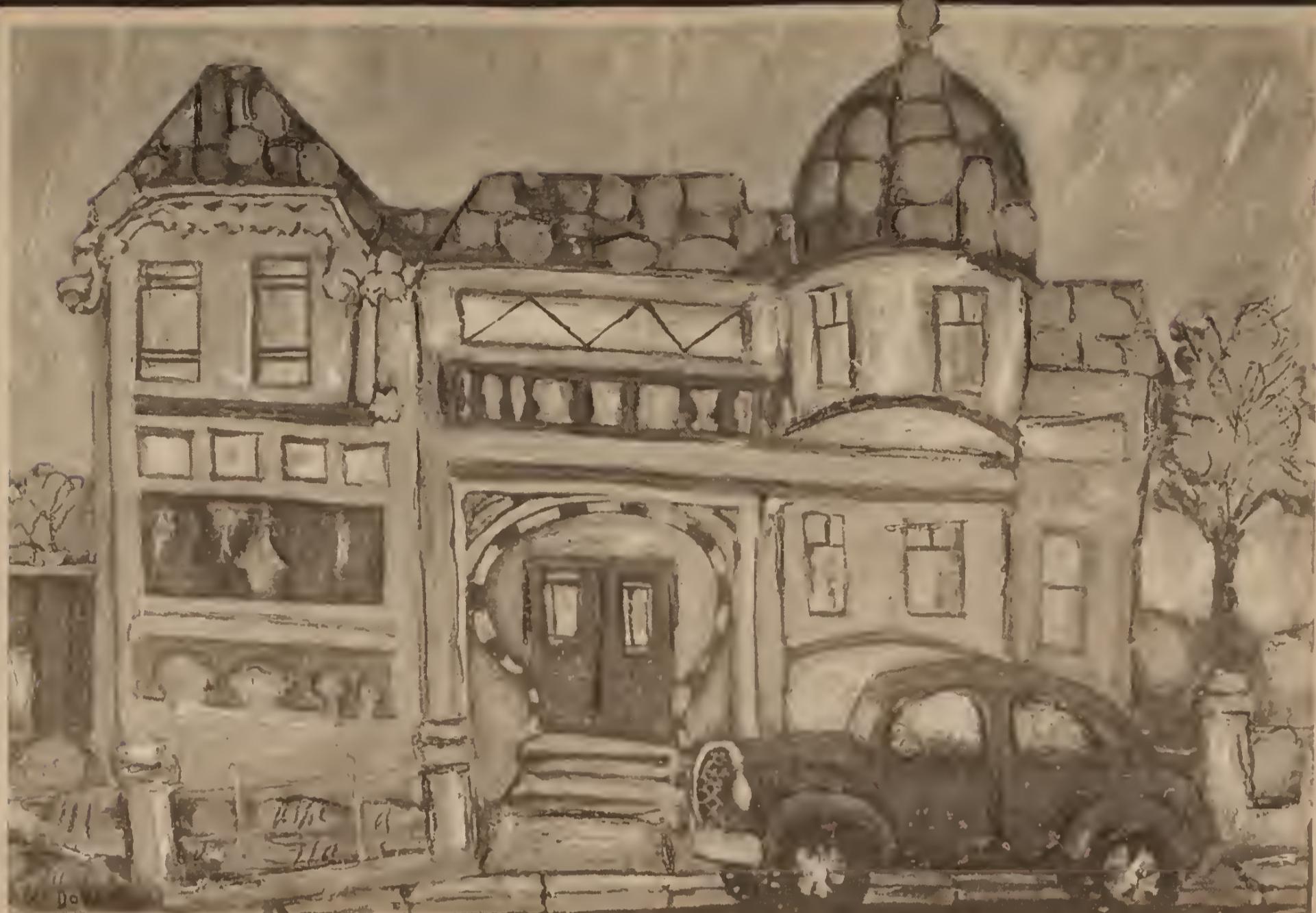


# New Mission News

COMFORTING THE AFFLICTED AND AFFLICTING THE COMFORTABLE SINCE 1980 • SEPTEMBER 1999



The McMullen House 827 Guerrero painted by artist Ben Dominguez See page 17

## The G Question

Will the Mission's unique character survive?

By Victor Miller

The Mission has become San Francisco's G Spot, G as in gentrification, an upscaling process that is making sweeping changes to the neighborhood's demographics and has created a serious threat to its affordable and diverse character. The gentrification debate has a number of divergent themes, a very wide sampling of which appears in this issue under the heading "The G Question". Opinions vary from those who see the racial element as the prime mover in moving people out to those who regard gentrification as an unmixed blessing.

The two most common questions that arise when any community is undergoing an economic upsurge are: "Who benefits?" and "Who gets pushed out." So far, low and middle-income tenants are getting the boot in record numbers. (See page 7.) Developers are reaping enormous profits building boxy "stealth condos" called live/work (See page 8) which they claim are the only answer to the housing crisis. (See full-page ad by the SF Residential Builders Association on page 4.) As the lost frenzy finally phases out, construction of massive office complexes threatens to drive land prices and consequently the cost of everything else up even further (See Page 10.) Real estate speculators are mak-

ing a bundle selling rental units as tenancies in common, forcing out long term residents, many of who are people of color and seniors. (See pages 6 and 9.) The momentum is toward a more expensive and more homogenized environment. Suburbia moves into town and some of the newcomers are not so nice. (See page 11.)

There is a Borgian fatalism among some that resistance is futile. Others, albeit late in the game are willing to put up a fight. The Mission has always been a place that has been simultaneously over organized - there being some sort of group or agency for every six or seven people - and completely disorganized - since few of these groups ever work together on common issues. We have no community organizations or we've got dozens of community organizations, either way it adds up to zero political clout. Perhaps, gentrification and the special extinction it portends is just the type of evolutionary stimulus needed to hone our survival skills and overcome our ineptitude on the grassroots level. To this end there will be a "mass mobilization and potluck brunch" at Cellspace at 2050 Bryant on Saturday, September 18th at 11am.

This Mission is vital. As the United States becomes a more multicultural

Continued on page 6



## Anti-Hate March on Mission Street

A recent series of crimes in California, including attacks on synagogues in Sacramento and a racially motivated shooting spree in Los Angeles in which one man died, have created a heightened awareness that fanatics and bigots are always with us. In July anti-Asian posters appeared in the Richmond and Sunset Districts. On August 20 flyers urging Latinos to go away were posted along Mission Street. The flyers were filled with misspellings and misdrawn swastikas but the intent to terrorize was clear enough.

Racist graffiti has always been a tiny but unpleasant part of the neighborhood but the flyers, crude as they were, implied an organized campaign. A strong commu-

nity response seemed in order and that was what happened.

On Saturday August 28, more than a hundred people gathered at the 24th and Mission Bart Plaza to demonstrate their outrage. After listening to several speakers the group marched down Mission Street to the 16th Street Bart Plaza chanting "Kick the racists out the door. We won't take it anymore," and "El pueblo unido jamas seran vencido." The march and vigil were sponsored by the Coalition to Stop Hate Crimes and, according to handouts distributed at the event, endorsed by the Asian Law Caucus, the Center for African American Arts and Culture, the Movement for Immigrant Rights, YWCA Mission Girls and a number of other organizations.

## RAP'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

SEE  
PAGE 3

mccla 2868 mission street, san francisco, (415) 821-1155.

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# RAP responds to the crisis

Troubled youth agency's supporters form the Friends of RAP

By Victor Miller

After serving the community for 30 years as the Mission's main gang prevention and intervention effort the Real Alternatives Program (RAP) is facing a seemingly insurmountable financial crisis. (See New Mission News August 1999) With \$375,000 in debts and most of its youth programs taken over by other agencies, RAP is in deep trouble. Last month former directors, including Roberto Hernandez and Ray Rivera, along with a strong contingent of youth came together at the urging of RAP founder Jim Queen to form the Friends of RAP, a grassroots drive to keep RAP alive.

In an emotional and sometimes tearful session attended by about 50 people, representing two generations, those whose lives were changed by RAP struggled to come to grips with what might well be the end of an era.

A four page "Report to the Community" by RAP's board of directors outlining the origins of the financial disaster was handed out at the meeting. It is a step forward since most nonprofits recognize no obligation to explain their activities to the communities they serve. Basically, it states that RAP, like many nonprofits spent more than it took in, paid for some programs with money contracted to be spent elsewhere and failed to get reimbursed for some expenses. When this type of thing becomes a significant part of the entire coming year's budget an organization usually goes under. The Report argues that RAP has kept at least 100 youth a year from being incarcerated. Since incarceration costs the public \$35,000 a year, RAP has delivered \$105,000,000 in services to the community during a 30-year period during which it was paid \$7,500,000. Looked at in this way, a \$375,000 deficit doesn't look so bad, however, the problem is not in how you look at it but in how you pay it off.

That fact that RAP is still alive and kicking at all is due less to the efforts of its administrators and directors than to the tremendous loyalty of Mission District youth who have always been its primary strength. They see RAP's disintegration as a reflection on themselves, on their pride and the lives they thought they'd salvaged. As one young woman, Aisha Beliso put it "I don't accept that RAP fucked up because this is me; this is where I come from and if RAP fucked up what does that say about me? We were around before Willie Brown and we'll be around after, even if we have to call it something else and start all over from nothing."

Many remembered times when they were on the street themselves and the only way back in was through RAP, a unique combination of street savvy skills and remarkable ability to work within the Byzantine world of the juvenile justice system. Tracy Brown, who attended last month's meeting, described her first experiences with RAP. "I remember when we were all out on the street and we threw rocks at the RAP van when it would come by and they would tell us to hide because the cops were coming by to bust us for curfew. Well, when the cops did come by we were already hiding because we were hiding from the RAP van." Brown eventually changed her mind about RAP. Now a reformed rock thrower, she is the director of the Mission Girls for the YWCA. "The trouble is RAP got too caught up in politics and stopped being in everybody's face," Brown said.

Roberto Hernandez agreed "When Feinstein was mayor we got things done by getting in her face, maybe it's time we got in Willie Brown's face." Many blame Brown for not coming to the organization's rescue. Hernandez pointed out that the AIDS Foundation and other nonprofits have been bailed out when enough political pressure was applied. A proposal for storming the mayor's office was enthusiastically endorsed.

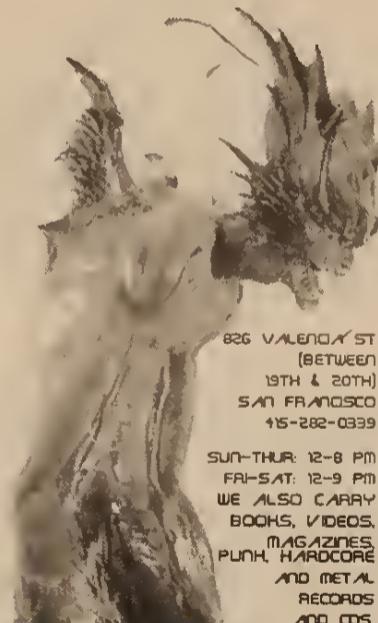
Even RAP's harshest critics admit that it was one of the few agencies that could deal with youth who were lost to the street; juvenile offenders moving ever closer to being adult felons and part of the revolving door prison system. Julia Zabori, a RAP staffer and former member of the San Francisco Youth Commission, felt that without RAP these kids now had nothing. "Can you imagine what it's like to be kicked out of every institution in this society and then have RAP close its doors?"

Where the Friends of RAP will go from here depends largely on the willingness of the community to support an organization that has done tremendous good for three decades but has been in turmoil and chaos for the last two years. The Friends of RAP can be reached at (415) 550-2347.

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It ain't all that tight	Like they say
Like they say	U wanna get blasted 4 a color'
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# The assault on loft housing

*"An honest man is the noblest work of God."* —Robert Burns

Sadly, there is no surplus of honest women or men among the San Francisco press corps. The SF Weekly's George Cothran continues to vent ad nausea, in lieu of substance, that loft housing proponents are both "assholes" and now "bullies." The SF Examiner would have City residents believe that live-work builders are denying schoolchildren decent classrooms. The SF Bay Guardian, in a conspiracy genre all its own, suggests that weary old Bolsheviks such as Calvin Welch and Sue Hestor hold the answers to today's housing crisis, ignoring evidence that it was they, in fact, who created it. In reality, understanding the live-work controversy requires a working knowledge of land use policy, public finance, and the local cottage industry of non-profits which enjoy public subsidy and freeloading on the public dime. Acquiring such knowledge is obviously not the path chosen by the local press.

On Monday, August 23rd, six members of the Board of Supervisors rejected these bogus arguments and lies when they voted to defeat Supervisor Sue Biernan's proposed retroactive moratorium on the construction of 1500 desperately-needed units of live-work housing. Supervisors Alicia Beccari, Amos Brown, Barbara Kaufman, Mabel Teng, Michael Yaki and Leland Yee confirmed what the dim lights of our local press corps refuse to confront: San Francisco's housing market suffers from a supply and demand imbalance that is pricing not only our poor, but the working middle class out of the City.

The only rational answer to today's housing crisis was clearly stated by SFSU Economics Professor Michael Potepan on KPFA radio on August 23rd, 1999: build more housing and redress the current demand and supply imbalance — that's the way to take upward pressure off rents. Federal estimates point to this fact: the median income among City tenants is approximately \$58,000 a year. When individuals of such income can only rent because their housing of choice is unavailable to purchase, others are squeezed from the housing market.

Our housing crisis is best explained through economics. It is easy copy for newspapers eager to sell papers or advertisements to blame the current situation on personalities or personal disputes — all the more so if some should have a brogue, or should a newspaper's management suffer from a WASPy bias. But the Residential Builders Association (RBA) knows that San Francisco's problem is structural. It is a product of poor public policy. In the words of writer Matt Smith in the otherwise reckless SF Weekly (8/18/99):

*"San Francisco's drum-tight housing market is not the result of a newfound NIMBY attitude. It's the end product of a unique—and chronically shortsighted—political culture 50 years in the making that is now part of the City's genetic structure."*

Here are the facts. They counter the lies and spin of the well-funded and self-interested front group of the non-profit freeloading, the "Coalition of Jobs, Arts and Housing."



RBA members have generated over \$100 million in new taxes for San Francisco school children.

## The definition of Artist Live/Work Housing:

City planners in 1988 projected that 10,000 live/work units should be built as a result of new construction or conversion. Even allowing for the construction of the 1500 "pipeline" units, only a little more than half of the proposed total, 5500, will be built. The law was amended in 1990 to expand use of live/work units in the South of Market.

Two distinct definitions for artist/live-work housing apply. The first applies to the South of Market where a majority of live/work units have been built. The second applies to live/work units that have or are being built in the Northeast Mission (NEMIZ), Potrero Hill and 3rd Street corridor.

The 1988 ordinance still applies to live/works outside of the South of Market area. Contrary to the assertion of live/work opponents, the 1988 live/work law did not limit non-residential use of live/work units to simply "artists." Rather, the allowable uses are those defined as "arts activities and spaces" in Section 102.2 of the City Planning Code. Arts activities are broadly defined as:

"Arts activities shall include performance, exhibition (except exhibition of film), rehearsal, production, post-production and schools of any of the following: dance, music, dramatic art, film, video, graphic art, painting, drawing, sculpture, small-scale glass works, ceramics, textiles, woodworking, photography, custom-made jewelry or apparel, and other visual, performance and sound arts and crafts. It shall also include commercial arts and art-related business service uses including, but not limited to, recording and editing services, small scale film and video developing and printing; titling; video and film libraries; special effects productions; fashion and photo stylists; production; sale and rental of theatrical wardrobes; and studio property production and rental companies. Arts spaces shall include studios, workshops, galleries, museums, archives and theaters, and other similar spaces customarily used principally for arts activities..."

During the last decade, with the multimedia industry and the use of the Internet, the range of commercial arts and art-related business service uses has become even broader. This is particularly true in San Francisco which is among the most "wired" and Internet conscious parts of the world.

opment, e.g. residential subdivisions, and/or growth in the school population, the new tax for commercial, residential and industrial development was an answer to the overcrowded classroom.

Currently live-work developments pay a one-time fee into what the SFUSD calls the "Capital Facilities Fund." However, the money spent on "reconstruction, remodeling or replacement of existing school facilities" is not determined by contributions to the "Capital Facilities Fund," but by what the Legislature in Sacramento authorizes the SFUSD to spend through the "State School Building Lease-Purchase Fund." The SFUSD draws upon no less than 7 distinct funding sources to pay for all of its capital improvements. The one-time development fees which helped finance the "State School Building Lease-Purchase Fund" accounted for less than 20% of the total capital improvements made by the SFUSD in 1998. The source for this information is the SFUSD's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 1997-1998.

Unlike other building associations, the RBA has never challenged the legality of this tax. Less public-minded associations have challenged the legal use of development fees for anything other than the construction of new school facilities. Instead, the RBA has supported local bond measures such as Proposition A in 1997 which provided the SFUSD with \$90 million to fix and repair local school facilities. Unlike live-work opponents, RBA members make a financial contribution to public education. Our opponents enjoy Federal IRS 501 C-3 non-profit status, meaning they don't pay taxes of any kind. They contribute nothing to the local, state or federal tax base. They are freeloading.

Builders of live-work units do pay the one-time development fee which is based on their residential AND commercial uses. Since 1988, live-work developers have paid \$36 million in one-time development fees to the SFUSD.

But one-time development fees are distinct from the annual ad valorem property taxes which our property owners pay both to the City and the SFUSD. In San Francisco, over the past 20 years, RBA members have built 15,000 housing units which have generated over \$100 million for the SFUSD general fund. Had the City properly implemented recommendations from Mayor Dianne Feinstein's "1981 Citizens Task Force," which called for the construction of 3,000 housing units per year instead of the pitiful 750 which have been built since then, the SFUSD would have benefited from an additional \$150 million in revenue. Local property tax revenue usage is not hampered by the limitations of the one-time development fees, which must go into separate capital fund budgets.

This is yet another myth live-work opponents have perpetuated in order to further their elitist and exclusionary agenda.

The RBA thanks you for taking the time to learn the truth about the latest assault on loft housing production. The next time you are amazed by San Francisco's housing and rental prices, telephone Supervisors Katz, Leno, Biernan and Ammiano and ask them what on earth continues to motivate them to vote to limit housing production in a city that is crying out for more.

The G Question

# Generation Gentrification

By Taigi Smith

It was the summer of 1980 and I was a tall, skinny, 8-year-old girl with big feet and wild braids. We had gathered at our usual spot on 20th and Shotwell to shoot the breeze and amuse ourselves. Like so many other city kids, there was little for us to do on the long days of summer. We were the children of bus drivers, housekeepers, migrant workers and the unemployed. We lived together on this block of land in apartment buildings, surrounded by automotive shops, and single-family homes in the heart of the Mission, America's Latin pit-stop for high hopes and big dreams.

Some families had come seeking refuge from the bloody wars that ravaged Central America during the 1980's, while others had immigrated North to escape the poverty of Mexico's barrios. My mother, a 25-year old single parent, had found the Mission through a friend, and although she'd never admit it, mom was a hippie seeking solace from the craziness of the Haight-Ashbury. What we got was the Mission, an eccentric mix of hardworking families, murals, winos, prostitutes, transient hotels, and seedy bars. Instead of streets lined with gold, we got Catholic churches, quinceañeras, homemade tortillas, and a chance to sell garlic on Mission Street or pick oranges in the burning California sunshine.

I'd lived in the gray building next to the fire department for as long as I could remember. For years, I listened to the sounds of fire trucks racing quickly down the streets of the barrio. From my open window, I could watch the firemen go through their daily exercises each morning at 6am. The Mexican taquerias and Latino supermarkets had become a part of my culture just as the black on my skin. Sounds of Spanish were so common that it was often easy to forget that you were in the United States. I became so familiar with the language that I could almost understand it as well as English, often surprising native Spanish speakers.

My mother and I were just about the only black people in the neighborhood, so it was almost impossible not to notice us. I remember the rallies on 24th and Mission and the sounds of political activists demanding freedom with the words "No More, No More, U.S. Out of El Salvador." Somehow those activists found refuge on this little stretch of California land, and chose to fight instead of forget the bloodshed in Central America. Who would have thought, that again, almost 20 years later, these same people would still be fighting for freedom?

**Going Home**

I returned home in 1996 after moving to Brooklyn, New York. I'd been home for short periods of time throughout the years, but now something had changed. The brown faces of the mission had diminished and I was trapped in an unfamiliar place filled with white faces and trendy bars. The word on the street was that the neighborhood was being taken over by yuppies and there was nothing that the people of color could do about it.

People were being packed up and pushed out in record numbers to make way for yuppies who would pay exorbitant rents to live in what the Utne Reader now called "One of the Trendiest Places to Live In America." The streets of the Mission were now lined with Land Rovers and BMW's. Neighborhood dives now had bouncers and were serving \$10 raspberry

martinis. Abandoned warehouses had not been converted into affordable housing, but instead into fancy lofts costing between \$300-500,000. And ironically, the Army street projects had been demolished, leaving hundreds of people displaced and possibly homeless. The message was clear. It was time for the blacks and browns to get out. The whites were moving in and that was it.

My building had been spared from the hands of wealthy developers, but it was now a war zone. My mother, a housekeeper, had formed a sort of guerrilla coalition with the building's other black people. Evidently, the new whites in the building were trying to take over. Ideally, they wanted to fill the place with filmmakers, writers, and other artist types. They were communicating via e-mail with the building manager to secure all new vacancies for their own, and while the plan almost worked, they failed to fully homogenize the building.

These were the same people who viewed me with suspicion when I returned to Shotwell Street. Their icy glares easily translated into "What are YOU doing here?" I'd been gone for almost 3 years, none of these people knew me, and so they naturally became suspicious of the black girl "loitering" around the building. It really didn't matter that I'd spent almost 20 years of my life in the building. To them, I was another brown face that they were working to get rid of.

I needed so badly to say, "This is my neighborhood. I grew up here," but my anger silenced me. The stares had as much to do with the Ford Explorer I was driving, the clothes I was wearing, and the credentials I carried as they did with the color of my skin. I'd been in New York long enough to realize that there really wasn't a thriving black community in San Francisco. Back east, my friends drove Benzes and Suburbans. We lived well, but worked hard. Some of us had managed to start our own businesses or write books. We'd become lawyers and music industry moguls. We were the next generation of black leaders and educators. More than anything else, it was the ignorance of these new age yuppies that annoyed me.

There was no way that they'd ever respect me as a black woman because they were not used to dealing with black people in positions of power, let alone a little black girl hanging around the Mission driving a Ford Explorer. In their eyes, I was an impostor, some strange breed of black person they just didn't understand. What they didn't know was that, not only had I come from the Mission, but I was smart enough to realize that there was something fundamentally wrong with the way that they were using money and power to take away land that never belonged to them in the first place. Historically, California was the home of the Indians. Then this was Latino land and they were taking over Latino soil...again.

**The "Mission Deluxe"**

It is the evil that lurks behind the martini bars and hipster sushi spots that scares me. More than the air of wealth that permeates the neighborhood, is the air of superiority that angers me. It is the look of hate I receive when I go home that aggravates me. It is the look that says, "We are willing to take over this neighborhood at all costs," that leaves me wondering about the future of my friends and neighbors. It is the realization that People of Color have never and will never have a place to truly call our own.



The old neighborhood, a teenage Taigi Smith (third from the right) and her mother Debbie (second from the left).

In the Mission, now called the Mission Deluxe, I lived side by side with Mexicans, El Salvadorans, Cubans, Filipinos, whites, Blacks, heroin addicts, prostitutes, cholos, street vendors, dancers and homemakers. I learned that poor people can live side by side, speak different languages, and thrive within the confines of our own neighborhood. We could not only survive, but also thrive in a city filled with the rich and elite. I remember when most white people were either too scared or just too good to venture into the Mission unless they were looking for cheap drugs or cheap sex.

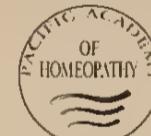
I remember the silent gangsters who roamed the streets clad in Ben Davis jeans, Dickies, and Sir Jackets. They wore colored bandanas, dark sunglasses and sex appeal like a second skin. Perhaps it was the threat of those silent gangsters that kept the yuppies away. Whatever the cause of their absence, I find myself wishing for the days of old. It is a shame that they discovered a neighborhood existed where the food is good, and the culture rich beneath the facade of poverty. They saw the opportunity to "take back the land" and they seized that opportunity. In the midst of doing so, they took away the neighborhood I loved so much.

I pray the remaining old timers will hold on to their leases, refuse to sell their

property, and fight to keep their businesses open when development companies strong-arm them. For us, the inhabitants of the Mission, this place was more than just a place to buy expensive coffee and half million-dollar lofts. It was where we laid our roots and our memories. For some, it was where they planned to die.

In cities and towns everywhere, people of color are being evacuated from their homes to make room for the nouveau riche. For black, Latino, and poor people, "gentrification" is just another word this country uses to exploit its colored and disenfranchised. Ask the blacks being pushed out of Harlem about the meaning of "gentrification." Ask the Puerto Ricans of the Lower East Side where they will go when Alphabet City no longer contains the letters P and R. And what about the Blacks and Latinos in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn struggling to maintain their little piece of Americana? Where will they go? I fear that it is only a matter of time before the building I grew up in is sold and converted into condominiums, or even worse, lost spaces. Whether you call it "gentrification" or "revitalization" the translation is simple: Whites only. In the end, we're only asking to be left alone in the communities we worked so hard to create. Is a place called "home" really too much to ask for?

Taigi Smith is a producer with CBS news magazine 48 Hours.



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# Where would I go?

Thirty year Mission resident Lola Mckay faces eviction

By Victor Miller

Eighty three year-old Lola McKay sits in the living room of her Alvarado Street apartment reading another novel by her favorite author, Louis L'Amour. She's lived here for the last thirty years, going to the same corner market for groceries, getting her hair done every Thursday at the same beauty parlor. The many friends she once had in the neighborhood have long since moved away or died but McKay describes herself as "a home person not a goer." The companionship the *Riders of the Purple Sage* or the characters of Diane Fuller Ross' endless *Wagons West* series, an occasional cigarette smoked while music from one of the easy listening stations plays from a small portable radio have made for a solitary but tranquil existence. Now, plagued with severe arthritis, she rarely ventures more than a few blocks from her home, except for recently when its necessary to go to court to fight her eviction.

John Hickey of the John Hickey Brokerage firm bought the four-flat building where McKay resides earlier this year and is determined to remove her so the flats can be sold as condos. Only McKay, paying \$80 a month rent, remains in the building and stands in Hickey's way of making a killing. Hickey is using the Ellis Act, which allows landlords to get out of the rental business by taking the property out of the rental market, but only for this property not the many other San Francisco buildings he owns. An ordinance passed by the Board of Supervisors in January would make this harder to do but Hickey successfully challenged the law in court and had it overturned. Hickey also had other court business. The U.S. Attorney is prosecuting him for securities mail and wire fraud, claiming Hickey swindled investors out of millions of dollars. He was indicted in July 1997 but continues at large and in the real estate business.

## A stranger at the door

McKay's first indication that her security was at risk came earlier this year when she was surprised by a stranger who appeared at her back door (not accessible directly from the street) and talked his way inside, explaining he was interested in renting an apartment in the building. "He said he was a friend of mine but that man turned out to be the biggest phony you ever saw. I told him I owned everything in here, even the paint on the wall. You should have seen his face when I said that. I thought he was going to bite his tongue off."

McKay does own quite a bit in her apartment. When she first moved in the place was, in her words "ramshackle". The owner Ralph Davison lived in one of the other flats and let McKay put in new plumbing fixtures, wall to wall carpeting and generally make the place habitable in lieu of rent, a process that took her years. Davison and McKay became and remained the closest of friends until one day she went to ask him to do some shopping and found him dead from a heart attack on his kitchen floor. Now the good will that kept her in her home for three decades is gone and Lola McKay must face the greed-driven world of San Francisco in the nineties.

McKay is being assisted by the San Francisco Tenants Union and Eviction Defense Network which have staged a number of protests on her behalf and defended by pro bono attorneys from the Tenderloin Housing Clinic, but the struggle for her has been both physically and emotionally trying. "I look out this window and I say to myself 'Lola McKay where in the world can you live if not here? What in the world are you going to do?" When one of her attorneys reminded her of an upcoming court date McKay looked sad and exhausted, saying "My back just hurts so much. Do I really have to go?" Finally she agrees. The deposition sessions with Hickey's attorney have already taken their toll. "That man just asked so many questions. Some of the words he used I didn't understand and I got so tired," she said

## Subsidized eviction

One of the most shocking things about McKay's eviction is that, in a sense, it is being subsidized by the taxpayers. In his fight to avoid conviction on fraud charges Hickey claimed he needed a free court-appointed attorney and, to the outrage of prosecutors, was granted one. With the savings he made at the public expense in his fight to stay out of prison, indigent real estate mogul Hickey has been able to hire an attorney to throw Lola McKay out in the street. The U.S. Attorney's office refused comments on the case, which continues to work its way slowly through the legal system.

No matter what happens to McKay, Hickey is going to make a lot of money on the four Alvarado Street flats he bought for \$550,000 earlier this year. In today's red-hot housing market each flat could easily sell for \$300,000. That's \$350,000 profit for Hickey, even if McKay kept her apartment -but Hickey apparently wants it all.



Lola McKay is in the midst of a fight to save her home.

Meanwhile, McKay's life in the empty building is filled with uncertainties and difficulties. A few years ago when she went to answer the door a man tried to wedge his foot in the door-way and break in. "I told him; get your Goddamn foot out of there or I'll break it off and with that I slammed the door," McKay said. Since then she won't answer the door unless she can see who it is. Normally this is a good policy but a few months ago some one ran up a huge bill on McKay's phone. She couldn't pay, so the phone company with its usual sensitivity cut off its service and has yet to work out an accommodation with McKay to restore it. All this has made it difficult for McKay's supporters and lawyers to schedule appointments and generally keep in touch, making her ordeal all the more frustrating and confusing.

When asked if there was anything she wanted to say to her neighbors in the Mission McKay replied, "I just love my home. I don't want to move."

On Thursday, September 9, McKay's eviction trial begins in Superior Court. Supporters hoping to jam the courtroom will meet outside the courthouse at Polk and MacAllister at 8:30 am. For more

information call the San Francisco Tenants Union at (415) 282-6543 or Chris Daly at the Eviction defense Network (415) 436-9707.

continued from page 1

## The G Question

uation, gentrification of the cities makes it more and more an economically and ethnically segregated nation. How are the competing economic interests going to relate to each other in the coming century except as hostile, geographically segregated camps? How will different cultures in the same country avoid the superstitions of race and bigotry if the only places where they have the opportunity to live together and know one another are turned into trendy playgrounds for the affluent? The former director of the Redevelopment Agency, Justin Herman, oversaw the demolition of the working class neighborhood where the Moscone Convention Center now stands. He justified the action with the often-repeated quip "This land is too valuable for poor people to live on." The old plutocrat got it backwards, communities like the one Herman destroyed and this one that is currently under siege are just too valuable for the greedy to prey upon.

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The G Question

# Aftershocks from Loma Prieta

Earthquake continues to shake up the city a decade later

By Michele Munn

**T**here are still social and economic aftershocks from the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. Many property owners are applying to conduct seismic retrofits on their properties, and some are using this as an excuse to evict tenants. In other cases, the owner neglects to perform the required retrofit work and thus endangers the lives of residents living in, and visitors to, the premises.

Last year, according to San Francisco Rent Board statistics, 350 eviction notices were served to Mission residents, easily surpassing the next closest district, Haight-Ashbury, with 248. Further Rent Board figures show that the Mission also led all districts in reports of alleged wrongful eviction, with 175. And, says Matt Brown, Director of St. Peter's Housing Committee, a tenant advocacy group, "It's just getting worse and worse. Last year we responded to over 4,000 calls from tenants."

So just what is going on?

George Lopez is a janitor with Local 87. For over 12 years, he has lived at the Alturas Apartment building on the corner of Mission and 16th Streets. In early January Levinson Family Revocable Trust bought this apartment block. In February the new owners applied for a permit to do seismic retrofit work on the building, and tenant complaints skyrocketed. Says Lopez: "I received a notice from the owner that my apartment was a place for prostitution and drug use. Then I received a notice that my apartment was for only one person [vs. the four it can comfortably house]. A third notice said that my rent would increase 50-60%. Then a notice came saying that request for the increase in rent was a mistake. Then I received a final notice that I had three days to pay the rent, and three days to leave."

Matt Brown says, "We are seeing a lot of evictions and eviction notices, where the landlord uses one pretext as an excuse to try to get the tenant to leave."

## Retrofit Legislation

In the wake of the 1989 earthquake, the City passed a seismic safety law, requiring seismic reinforcements, or retrofits, on many of our City's buildings. The Department of Building Inspection declared certain buildings a Risk Level corresponding to their calculated vulnerability on a number of safety criteria. The legislation further ordered that should temporary relocation be necessary, assistance payments of \$33 per day, per tenant, up to a maximum of \$1,500 each month, per unit should be paid. The law also stipulates that the tenant has every right to move back into the building after the retrofit is complete, and that the rent may be increased by no more than 10% annually, to compensate for the cost of the retrofit.

Problems occur when the owner serves a 90-day notice to the tenants, which does not specify the tenants' rights, or when the owner starts a harassment campaign. The tenant, trying to minimize his hassle of finding a new flat in today's tight housing market, vacates the premises before being served the 30-day written

notification of the retrofit construction. Without realizing he is entitled to compensation, he thus forfeits relocation compensation and the right to move back into the unit once the rework is complete.

Miguel Tamaya, Tenant Coordinator for Mission Housing Development Corporation, said, "We are really concerned about residents. The new owners come in and try to evict residents. 'I have an eviction notice so I have to leave,' they think. They don't know their rights and wind up being victimized."

## And If You Thought You Were Safe

In the Mission District, 107 buildings are subject to the building retrofits. But thus far, only 27 of these unreinforced masonry buildings (UMBs) have completed their retrofit, according to city records.

The most critical buildings in the Mission are the Victoria Theater on 16th and Capp, the Women's Building at 3543 18th Street, 25 14th Street, 299 Dolores Street, 651 Dolores Street and 1250 Valencia Street. These buildings are Risk 1, meaning that the structure "is the most dangerous, in terms of public safety" explains Wayne Lawrence, Program Administrator for the Seismic Safety Loan Program in the Mayor's Office of Economic Development. The Department of Building Inspection required the retrofit for Risk 1 Buildings to be completed by August 15, 1996.

Lack of available financing to fund the retrofits is not an excuse for failing to complete the construction work, says Wayne Lawrence. He explained that in 1992 the Board of Supervisors created a seismic safety loan program, and voters passed a \$350 million bond to arrange the necessary funds. Lawrence noted that plenty of money remains in a kitty for owners to complete the retrofits.

With 24 North Mission buildings lacking completed retrofits, we can only expect many more complaints similar to the George Lopez case.

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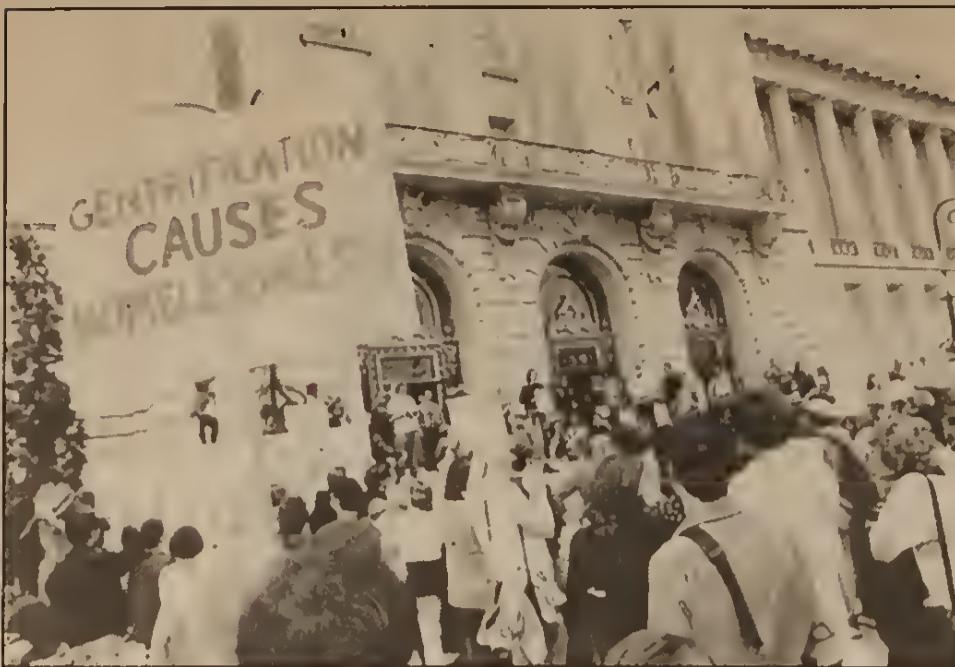
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A Coalition for Jobs Arts and Housing rally in front of city hall. Photo by Greg Roden

The G Question

## Anti-gentrification activists must organize citywide

by Joan Holden

Developers have won a battle in the war over "live-work": the Board of Supervisors killed a proposed moratorium, and another 1500 market-rate condos disguised as artists' lofts will be built in the Mission and other southeastern neighborhoods. But opponents have laid the groundwork for the next battle, which could force developers to make 100+ of the new units affordable to actual artists. And the loft boom's end is in sight: in April, the Planning Commission banned future lofts from much of the city's industrial land. If you think this is bad news, you are either a dreamer who still believes the "Artists' Live-Work" law can be made to work for artists, or you are a developer.

Five Supervisors cited the city's need for housing as their reason for opposing the moratorium. Board President Tom Ammiano then proposed a simple legislative change that challenges Supervisors to put their votes where their mouths are: it classifies lofts, presently cheap to build because they are called "industrial," as housing. This would subject them to higher school taxes and permit fees, and requiring that 10% of units in buildings of over 10 units be affordable. To vote against this one, Supervisors would have to put themselves on record as being against increased school funding, increased income for the city, and affordability. They'd have to expose their real reason for voting No: fear of crossing Joe O'Donoghue, president of the Residential Builders' Association (RBA).

O'Donoghue flew back from Ireland to personally lead a demonstration on City Hall steps the day of the vote. To a crowd of RBA contractors, their wives, and laborers trucked in from job sites, he denounced artists as feeders at the public trough and defamed anti-loft activists by name. But his real work had been done long before, arm-twisting, logrolling, and pocket lining – specifically, \$200 K to the Democratic Central Committee, ensuring behind-the-scenes support from The Machine and the Mayor.

Loft opponents learned a big-lesson: despite a lot of recent press coverage, lofts are viewed as a localized neighborhood issue. Supervisors based south of Market supported the moratorium; except for Sue Bieman, who can't help following princi-

ple. Dozens of letters and calls, and repeated visits to Supervisors, weren't enough to affect polls from the districts they will run in next year. Anti-gentrification activists must organize citywide, linking issues important to different communities: artspace with small business protection, tenants' rights with demands for subsidized home down payments and low-interest mortgage loans.

**Industrial Protection Zones**

For the Mission, a key issue is industrial protection. In April the Planning Commission, exhausted by two years of controversy over lofts and confronted with a study by its own Department warning 27,000 jobs could be lost to gentrification, established an Industrial Protection Zone (IPZ) where no lofts can be built. The Mission's share is a modest patch: from

16th to 20th Streets between Potrero and Folsom, with a fringe along some blocks of Shotwell. Lofts, with more to come as the "pipeline" projects are built already pockmark the area. But it is still a working neighborhood with printers and wood shops on 17th Street, garment and upholstery shops in the Koret and Red Lion buildings, and auto body shops along Folsom. The Coalition for Jobs, Arts, and Housing went door-to-door there last spring and counted 124 small businesses, with 3,093 jobs.

NMN's regular land-use writer warns that multi-media offices (like lofts, classified as "industrial") could be a greater threat to industrial zones than lofts. This is an argument for reclassifying multi-media space, and not a reason to allow live/work in the IPZ. To talk of "crafting solutions" to make loft construction serve artists is to ignore history and political reality. Ask Alma Robinson of California Lawyers for the Arts, an original sponsor of the live-work law, how many genuine artists' lofts it has created. "Almost none". How many artists have been displaced by lofts? "Hundreds". The Planning Department and Planning Commission are wired to approve developers' projects. To stop them would take a blunt instrument: zoning. The new rules create a "buffer zone" around the IPZ where real live/work will be allowed. It's the best solution.

Joan Holden is a member of the Coalition for Jobs, Arts and Housing and a playwright with the San Francisco Mime Troupe

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The G Question

# Lofts and the TIC infestation

By Randy Shaw

I have heard many people blame the proliferation of market-rate lofts in the northeast section of the Mission for the eviction of long-term, predominantly Latino, tenants from the neighborhood. Some see lofts as symbolizing Mission gentrification and have targeted loft builders and residents as the engine behind the economic cleansing of the community.

But the controversy over live-work lofts ignores the true menace to Mission tenants: the conversion of rental housing to tenancies-in-common (TICs). TICs have all the attributes of condominiums except that, rather than buying individual units, individuals own a percentage of the building with the right to occupy a particular unit. Evictions to convert a rental unit into a TIC are not governed by the city's condo conversion law, which limits the conversion of rental housing to 200 units a year and ensures lifetime leases for senior tenants. Courts have also found that the state Ellis Act prohibits local restrictions on the conversion of rental housing to TICs, paving the way for yet another new strategy to displace tenants from their homes.

If lofts were causing tenant displacements either directly or through a ripple effect, there should be a pattern of such evictions near the lofts. This is not the case. There is little if any geographic connection between the construction of new lofts and owner move-in and Ellis Act evictions in San Francisco. These types of evictions have targeted areas nowhere near loft construction such as the Castro. And even the most high-profile evictions of

long-term tenants in the Mission (e.g., Mission and 30th Street, 23rd Street and Fair Oaks, Shotwell and 20th Street) are in buildings located nowhere near lofts or any new upscale housing.

Loft residents are not the urban pioneers whose move into borderline neighborhoods is a precondition for a major influx of capital. The Mission is attractive for investment and will remain so even if all new housing construction is stopped because it has many buildings whose characteristics put tenants most at risk of eviction.

These are:

1. Buildings housing long-term tenants paying well below current market rents.
2. Buildings on the market at lower prices than comparably sized properties (a result of the tenants' rents).
3. Buildings that can attract purchasers who will either personally occupy the tenants' former units or who will sell the units off individually to tenants-in-common.

It is these three criteria, rather than proximity to lofts or other new housing construction that is driving longtime San Francisco residents out of the city.

As the chief cause of Mission District misery, a full-scale war on TICs must be launched.

**Potential tactics include:**

- The picketing of open houses showing units vacated through eviction.

-A "corporate accountability campaign" that targets real estate companies which profit from the sale of former rental units as TICs.

-Public support for the passage of strong anti-TIC legislation soon to be introduced by Supervisor Bierman.

-Creating articles and leaflets educating potential TIC buyers about the reason the unit for sale is vacant, and what has happened to the 'disappeared' tenants.

-Creating publicity about TIC horror stories highlighting litigation between TIC owners, the potential difficulty of reselling, and the consumer safety of a deal whereby individuals are personally responsible for the mortgage payments of strangers.

-Publicizing the amount of quick profit made by speculators using TICs to feed off the poor.

To date, those who evict for profit.

create no new jobs, and eliminate rental housing sit quietly counting their money while loft builders and new loft residents are demonized for allegedly displacing tenants.

TIC purchasers who knowingly displace long-term tenants receive none of the public attacks heaped upon the loft buyer who may well have bought new housing rather than acquire a TIC.

Regardless of one's views on live-work lofts or other market-rate housing, the battle against gentrification must strive to keep current long-term tenants in their homes. The San Francisco Tenants Union, located at 558 Capp Street, has begun implementing innovative strategies to accomplish this goal. The more people and groups who join their efforts, the likelier the chance that grassroots power can overcome speculative greed.

*Randy Shaw is the Director of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic. THC manages the Mission's largest residential hotel, the Mission Hotel.*



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Bryant Square @ 20th and Bryant is slated for demolition. Photo by Judy West

### The G Question

## Bryant Square: Live/Work gone bad

A case history of what went wrong where things should have gone right

by Judy West

The entire block between Bryant and York, 19th and 20th was a haven for over a hundred artists and small businesses in the Mission for decades. Only a handful of tenants still remain today. Everyone is supposed to be out by the end of the year to make way for a new high-tech office park, complete with retail below a new five-story office building at 20th & Bryant and 50 high-priced and minuscule condos along York Street.

The previous owner had subdivided the 4 major buildings on the block into small industrial spaces affordable to a wide range of businesses from artists, furniture makers, upholstery, metal casters, picture framers, specialty knitting and sewing shops; nearly every facet of the design and support trades could be found there.

Some of the tenants also lived there and it was precisely these situations that the live/work ordinance was created to legalize and encourage. New building code and planning regulations were finalized in 1988 to meet the special conditions of upgrading existing commercial properties to something safe and habitable yet still functional for business. New construction of live/work buildings was also included, with a modified building code which among other things, requires tall ceilings to compensate for the lack of residential scale rear yards which is not required of live/work buildings in commercial districts.

In anticipation that the units would be desirable as simple residences, (which they wanted to avoid) the City placed provisions in the Planning Code that required any residential use of the spaces to be accompanied by work (commercial) activities. In the Mission (and lower Potrero Hill) art-related work activity was required in live/work spaces as a means of keeping the prices affordable, so as not to be in conflict or competition with existing industrial uses.

As anyone attentive to the live/work debate over the past couple of years knows the Planning Department has made no efforts what so ever to enforce the commercial use restrictions of the code (intended to keep live/work prices down). And as predicted, once the residential market latched onto the lofts and the neighborhoods became acceptable to upscale new residents, the prices have skyrocketed. The Planning Department made clear their intention not to enforce the commercial aspects of the code, repeatedly stating instead that we need housing in these areas and it should be open to anyone who wanted to live there... never mind the conflicts

and displacement of industrial uses. With the support of the City and preferential bank financing for housing, the developers went full speed ahead.

James Moore, who owned and managed the Bryant Square property for decades, got permits in 1996 to upgrade his buildings along York Street into 50 live/work and commercial condos. He then began the systematic process of not renewing leases in the York Street building and moving tenants who wanted to stay in the complex to his less desirable building at the corner of 20th and Bryant. With permits in hand he sold the entire city block in 1997 for approximately 5 million and is reported to have retired in Costa Rica.

### **And then it got worse!**

The new owners now plan to turn the property (an entire city block) into a high-tech office / retail complex. The building in which the few remaining industrial and artist tenants still reside at 20th and Bryant is slated to be torn down and replaced with a new 5 story office building. (See August issue of NMN for details)

Office developments historically generate far greater profits than housing and are consequently strictly regulated by the Planning Code to mitigate the impacts of the huge number of new occupants to an area that new offices generate. Parking requirements are greater and in large projects, office developments are even required to create new housing units (or pay substantial "in lieu of" fees instead). In contrast, live/work spaces receive relaxed planning code regulations.

designed to encourage the mixed-use, live and work scenario which should have been a good thing for San Francisco, if only it functioned that way.

### **The worst of two evils**

With all the controversy over live/work units becoming luxury residential condos the political climate has become so hostile to any housing in industrial areas that the new owners of Bryant Square were able to say (wringing their hands) that they inherited the live/work building permit and "would not be building any more of those (nasty) lofts, but would be building high-tech offices instead". How did we get to this place where creating housing is the problem and building offices is more acceptable?

Representatives from the arts community were convinced to team up with the more powerful business interests against the out-of-control live/work development, thinking that artists would be better able to compete with businesses for land than against the housing developers. But that was before the rent-paying power of the high-tech industry was fully appreciated. So instead of advocating that a significant percentage of the new live/work units be affordable and accessible to more than the highest paid Silicon Valley employees, the political momentum is pushing for a permanent ban on all types of housing in most industrial areas.

The South of Market rezoning of the 1980s was largely in response to a desire to limit the encroachment of office development into industrial areas, which was displacing blue-collar jobs. It is ironic that many of the same political leaders advocating for housing and the interests of "the little guys," and who were proponents of Proposition M (which established as a priority City policy the protection of industrial jobs from displacement by office development), are now advocating against new housing (live/work) in these areas. In their passion to cripple their long time adversary Joe O'Donoghue and his renegade construction workers (known as the Residential Builders Association) one of

the most innovative and successful forms of housing is being destroyed in the process, instead of repaired. And artists and industrial jobs are no better off for it.

The remaining Bryant Square tenants were given first option on the live/work lofts for sale on the York Street portion of their site, but at \$250,000 & up for a 500 square foot studio (including mezzanine) the units were not affordable or big enough to both live and work in. These legitimate businesses were not only displaced from the York St. building originally (under the false pretenses of "legalizing" existing spaces) but are exactly the kind of artists and tradesmen the City intended to support with the live/work ordinance. They also contribute greatly to the rich culture and creativity our City is famous for. Now they are being displaced by high-tech office. Does it have to be one or the other? Why can't live/work be more affordable? Would it not be better to require affordable units in live/work projects and still create the housing than to encourage the influx of new office projects while banning new housing for them?

### **Art survives, artists go**

Lillian Sizemore is one of the artists losing her workspace at 20th & Bryant which she currently shares with another mosaicist Laurel True. They are currently completing a ceramic tile mural commission by the Madrina Group (a Mission based non-profit).

The project is a part of a Mission Creek awareness effort, aimed at reclaiming the land along side the now underground and forgotten river which once drained from the agricultural valley of the Mission district out to the bay. The right-of-way along the river route is planned as a bikeway and greenbelt by local environmental activists teamed with artists.

The mural will be installed by the end of September at the corner of 16th and Harrison, at the site of a bridge that crossed the river until the late 1860s. It is hard to fathom the impact on San Francisco's culture and quality of life if we continue to lose the artists who enrich our lives in ways that money cannot buy.

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# Silicon Satan



## The Mission's true environmentalists

The young urban pioneers who have made the Mission district their home in recent years have seen many improvements in the quality-of-life that the neighborhood offers. Not least of these are the availability of valet parking for patrons of the elite restaurants and bistros that grace the trendy Valencia Street Nightlife Corridor and the up-and-coming stretch of Mission Street. No longer does a dinner excursion to a hip venue necessitate driving around in circles for half an hour or more trying to find a well-lit parking space. Now, all that separates the young professionals of Media Gulch from cutting-edge cuisine in an exclusive ambiance is a five-minute drive and a seven-dollar parking fee.

Yet as is often the case in the Mission, where self-seeking jealousy and resentment have all too successfully wrapped themselves in the mantle of "progressive" politics, certain elements are once again demonstrating that they are simply incapable of abiding by the old humanitarian maxim "live and let live." Sadly - but inevitably - valet parking has become yet another excuse for the neighborhoods disgruntled classes to attack their fellow residents' lifestyle choices.

I experienced their venom myself the other evening as I sat double-parked in my land cruiser outside the Slanted Door, waiting for the valet to take my keys. No sooner had I set the transmission to 'park' than a goateed, granola-chomping oaf on a bicycle started screaming at me that I was blocking the bike lane. Rather than treating him with the contempt he deserved, I generously undertook to give him a brief education in civics. I explained that public resources such as bike lanes are meant to be *shared* by the citizenry, and that sharing the bike lane - and thereby demonstrating his public mindedness - would require

nothing more on his part than the *minimal* effort of cycling around me. But my attempts to instill a sense of good citizenship in him were to no avail.

Of course his unwillingness to share the bike lane for a couple of seconds is quite typical of the pettiness and selfishness that inform the progressive mindset in the Mission District. In fact bike lanes themselves have their origin in this same selfish mentality, and represent nothing more than the attempt of a few to secure special privileges for what can never be anything more than a hobby. Anyone with a modicum of common sense can see that the bicycle will never replace the automobile as a viable means of transportation. Imagine commuting to Silicon Valley by bike, or cycling to the mall to pick up the week's supply of groceries! All bike lanes do is narrow the roadways, congest traffic, and thus exacerbate a city's pollution problems.

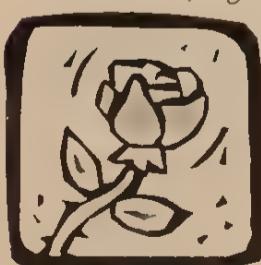
Yet, for those of us who truly care about preserving the environment rather than promoting selfish political agendas, there *is* a way to fight pollution and to safeguard the future of the planet. Since the automobile is here to stay, clearly one of the most effective things the environmentally conscious citizen can do is invest in leading-edge automotive technology, thus ensuring that the automobile manufacturers most dedicated to technological advancement can develop even more powerfully efficient engines.

This is why the true environmentalists aren't the sweaty, pedal-pushing losers huffing, puffing and wobbling their way so self-righteously up and down Valencia Street, but rather the sophisticated young professionals double-parked outside our finer restaurants in their purring BMWs, Boxsters and luxury SUVs.



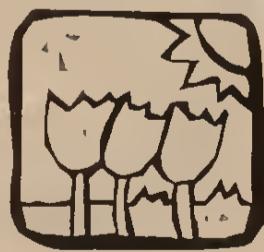
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# Mission District Calendar

## SEPTEMBER



Composed by Sarah Bardeen  
Design by Navarrete-Alazan

**Viva Chile!** The fine folks of Chile Lindo invite you to join them on Saturday, September 18 for a Chilean Independence Day Celebration, starting up around 12 noon and carrying on till 8pm at 2944 16th Street & Capp. For info: 621-6108.

**1**

### WEDNESDAY

Digital Manipulations — LAB gallery space presents Similar/Same, an exhibit by Rebeca Bollinger. Her new work experiments with digital media and image banks on the internet. Impact of technology on representation and communication. Through Sept. 18. 2938 16th St.

**2**

### THURSDAY

**Da Benefit** — Benefit for candidate for District Attorney Matt Gonzalez, featuring Marcus Shelby and Josh Jones, Latin Jazz. 10 pm, donation. Elbo Room, Valencia near 17th St. 552-7788.

**3**

### FRIDAY

**One-Act Wonders** — Storytime with the Dead Mrs. Treat & Pa'alam Maganda, original one-act plays. Teatro de la Esperanza, 2940 16th St. 7:30 today and tomorrow. Reservations encouraged, \$7-15. 285-6808.

**Bohemian Rhapsodies** — Poetry and music. Margot Pimienta Pepper, Ben Clark, Javier Pinzon, German Donati and guitar. 8 pm, Cale La Boheme. 3318 24th St.

**Stay Away From the Burning Man** — Cool your heels at an art opening at Build, featuring four local artists. They're not naked in the desert.



**4**

### SATURDAY

**City Mimics** — "City for Sale", summer theater by SF Mime Troupe, tackles some development issues near and...well...painful to our hearts here in the Mission. At Dolores Park all weekend at 2 pm, through Monday. Free. 285-1717.

**Gay Geeks** — Marathon talkfest for gay/bi/lesbian intellectuals and visionaries unafraid to express their inner nerds. 2-5 pm, Cafe Macondo, 3159 16th St. 351-5500.

**Electronic Music** — Local fave DJ Sep, Ubiquity recording artist Karry Walker and Ocean 8 perform feats of sonic excellence at Cale Du Nord, 2170 Market. 8 pm. 861-5016.

**5**

### SUNDAY

**Live Dub** — Actually not an oxymoron. Live dub set by Dubtribe Sound System, preceded by...you guessed it...DJ Sep. 9 pm, \$7. Elbo Room, Valencia near 17th St. 552-7788.

**7**

### TUESDAY

**Avante Garde Jazz** — Frankenstein plays music of Grachan Moncur III, Eric Dolphy, Andrew Hill and Jackie McLean. \$12-15. Intersection for the Arts. 446 Valencia St. 626-2787.

**Pet Loss Support** — Don't break out if your parakeet has gone on to that leathery beyond. Join the SPCA's free pet loss support group for grieving pet owners. 243 Alabama St. 7:30-9:30 pm. 554-3050.

**8**

### WEDNESDAY

**Arab Film Festival** — Arab Film Festival showcases films from all over the Arab world, skillfully taking on negative media-perpetrated stereotypes. And they're just friggin' good movies. Roxie Cinema, Fine Arts in Berkeley. Through Sept. 15. 564-1100.

**Hep C/HIV Co-Infection Talk** — Talk on co-infection studies for people with HIV and the Hepatitis C viruses. Dr. Manon Peters, MD. 6 pm, refreshments included. North Tower Auditorium, Davies Medical Center at Castro/Duboce 834-4100.

**9**

### THURSDAY

**Video Winners** — Cause, like, who wants to see losers? New Langton Arts holds a special reception for video award recipients. Free, 6-8 pm. 1246 Folsom. 626-5416.

**10**

### FRIDAY

**Play** — MCCLA hosts version of the classical play "The House of Bernarda Alba" written by poet Federico Garcia Lorca. The play is set in historic Spanish society, where women were as confined as the corsets they wore. Abstract musical and dance elements for the artsy. Spanish and English, differing times. 8 pm in English tonight. MCCLA 2868 Mission St. \$10. 554-8436.

**Hard Dancing** — Local 7 Choreographers present original choreography by local dance mavens. \$8, through Sept. 12. 3221 22d St. 824-5044.

**Killing My Lobster** — Comedy troupe plays at the Fringe Festival. This act reportedly has people wandering the aisles in hysterical delirium, so take your medication before you go. Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, through Sept. 18. 620 Sutter St., times vary. \$8 at the door only. Call 267-0642.

**Poetry By the Bay** — Mike Armasan and Elizabeth Robinson—both poets—prove to us that rhymin' and writin'...or at least writing...is not a dead art. New College, 766 Valencia. \$5.

**11**

### SATURDAY

**Sobering Theater** — Teatro Sabor and Miracle Theater put on "A Boy Named Guadeloupe", a bilingual rock opera about the son of Latina rock legend who battles good and evil in Hollywood. Now, where's the good in Hollywood? Through Sat., Teatro de la Esperanza, 2940 16th St., 2d Floor. 255-2320.

**Latina Inspiration** — Carmen Lomas Garza, one of the first Chicana artists to achieve widespread fame, will talk about her life and read from one of her books. Papel picado craft pro-

gram for families follows. 1-3 pm. Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett. 695-5090.

**Five Dollar Day** — Try out a Dance Mission adult dance class for \$5. Storytelling will keep kids amused while mom and dad shimmy and sweat. 9-5. 3316 24th St. 826-4441.

**Guerrilla Art for Mumia** — Head to 17th St. and Harrison, bring your artstuff, and create a creative ruckus. Free Mumia through the power of positive art. Mumia 911 will take place across the nation as people create and perform arts, and hold concerts, shows and exhibits around an anti-execution theme.

**A Good Cause, Finally** — Homeless youth work with adult artists to learn crafts at Artists' Mentorship Program. Bring your wallet to tonight's benefit show where youth, mentors and mentees will display their work. All proceeds go to AMP. Donations. 7-10 pm. 3075 21st St. 206-9945.

**House of Lucky** — A one-man show created by Frank Wortham. See one man inhabit 17 characters in a play about a beat poet trying to make it, so to speak, in 1999. The Marsh 1062 Valencia. Closes Oct. 2. Performance Thur. is pay what you can, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 pm. \$5-15. 826-5750.

**12**

### SUNDAY

**Latino Summer Fiesta** — Clearly the event of the summer. Rages from 11 am to 6 pm in Garfield Park. Free. KSOL will host several stages with tons of bands (tonnage includes equipment). KMEL's Youth for Respect and Peace in the Barrio Area will also represent, featuring Latinismo DJs. Activities for youth. A fab time for all. Harrison and 25th St. 2899 24th St. 826-1401.

**Comedy and Cuban Dancing** — Venue 9 hosts Latino comedian Bill Santiago in honor of Latin American liberation month. Followed by Cuban dance music. 8 pm. \$8-12. 289-2000.

**13**

### MONDAY

**Kids' Classes** — Dance Mission begins their regimen of relentless dance for tots and teens. 2 year olds to teens accepted. 3316 24th St. 826-4441.

**14**

### TUESDAY

**Northwest Bernal Alliance** — Neighborhood Association meeting open to all. 7 pm sharp. 190 Coleridge St. 282-2489.

**15**

### WEDNESDAY

**The War Room** — An art exhibition designed to broaden our understanding of war through military art, protest posters and media coverage. Donation. Opening 6-9 pm. 446 Valencia. Intersection for the Arts. 626-2787.

**Video Film Program** — New to the Mission Branch Library, 300 Bartlett. 695-5090.

**Sin Salvation** — Seven Deadly Sins art series by Tom Fowler gets gallery exposure. Lively personal interpretations of pride, greed, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. Through Oct. 1. 151 Potrero, Live Art Gallery. 695-0119.

**16**

### THURSDAY

**Comic Brit Play** — Give it a chance before you decide it's too smart for you. \*Shopping and

F\*\*king" dials direct from London's West End tackling the very Californian concerns of addiction, dependency and need. Wickedly funny, and apparently perpetrating a myth that money is the root of all evil. Through Oct. 16. Theater Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. 861-5079.

17

FRIDAY

Choreographers Choreographing, Dancers Dancing — More local talent bursts through the bubble to grab the Flashdance spotlight. Seven more choreographers present original work, \$8. 8 pm, through Sept. 19. 3221 22d St. 824-5044.

Watch Channel 9 — Cause it's good for you! And "Algun Dia", a film by Pepe Urquijo, is showing. A highly relevant coming-of-age tale about a young boy and his father dealing with family dynamics during Prop 187 time in California. 10 pm, KOED Channel 9.

18

SATURDAY

Latin Dancing — Grupo Folklorico Unidad Latina will celebrate Latin American Independence Month with dances from several Latin countries. 1 pm, Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett. 695-5090.

19

SUNDAY

Carmen Lomas Garza — See this artist's work on display Papel Picado, or paper cut-outs, is a traditional art given extremely new interpretations by Garza. Opening 3-5 pm. Free. Galeria de la Raza, 2857 24th St. 826-8009.

Hear the Native Tongues — American Indian Poetry & Song by Native Nations and the Good Red Road Poets and musicians, traditional southern plains drum. ODC \$2, youth and elders free. 2-5 pm, ODC Gallery

21

TUESDAY

State or Seasoned? — Long-standing arts organizations deserve and finally get public discussion at a forum on issues important to the arts. Panelists speak at 8 pm. Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia. 626-2787.

23

THURSDAY

Sexy Play — Sam Shepard's "Simpatico", an inebriated noir mystery not unlike his other inspired, dark and dirty-sexy inebriated works. A mix of low life and high society. Directed by Margo Hall. Through Oct. 17. \$9-14. Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia. 8 pm. 626-3311.

American Gladiators — No, not the cheesy tv show. This is Tom Quinn's "Maximum Security University" video presentation by Christian Parenti. The documentary exposes the "gladiator" fights rigged by guards at Corcoran Prison in the Central Valley. Based on camera footage of security yard, analyzes four prisoner killings by guards. 7:30, Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 282-9246.

24

FRIDAY

At Fifty-Still Dancing — Choreography featuring Virginia Matthews, Karen Attix, Mercy Sidbury and Marc Ream. Today and tomorrow, 8 pm. 3221 22d St. 824-5044.

25

SATURDAY

Health Fair — Free massages, presentations in four languages, cooking demos, and the chance to visit with health agencies. Catch up on how they're handling the health care crisis over tea. At Bethany Senior Center, 580 Capp. 10 am-2 pm.

Free Healings — We think the price won't effect the product. An offering from Psychic Horizons, 2 pm sharp. 972 Valencia St. 643-8800.

28

TUESDAY

Hipster's Guide to Not Working — Interested? Head down to Modern Times to catch Juliette Torrez, author of *The Sofa Surfing Handbook* and Cameron Tuttle, author of *The Bad Girl's Guide to the Open Road*. Both seem to epitomize a "bohemian lifestyle" and a true AAA traveling style: "attitude, adventure and ass-kicking good times." Books deal with OPP (other people's pets), long-term house-sitting, etc. Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 7:30 pm. 282-9246.

29

WEDNESDAY

Cultural Support Meeting — Bring ideas, suggestions, and comments regarding MCCLA programming. Open to all. 7:09 pm Main Theatre, 25th Street/Mission.

See A Guy Read — Author Alfredo Vea reads from his latest offering, *Gods Go Begging*. Lead character Jesse Pasadoble's story provides the backdrop for a passionate and profound meditation on war, race, history and desire. Follows a Latino vet from Vietnam facing gang wars on his own turf. Modern Times, 888 Valencia. 7:30 pm. 282-9246.

1

FRIDAY

Cyber-Stripping — 21st Century Stripper Cinema unveils itself live at the Roxie, featuring the act Interactive Cyber-Stripshow 2000. Multimedia exotic dance fest and videos. \$10. Roxie Cinema, 3117 16th St. 7:30 & 10 pm. 751-1659.

on...  
ONGOING



Tuesdays

Film Festival — \$2 margaritas at El Rio. And the MadCat Women's International Film Festival, showing films at dusk all month. \$5. 3158 Mission St.

Wednesdays

Live outdoor Flamenco show — At El Rio, 8 pm Sharp. Followed by same sex Salsa Dance class and bands. \$5-8. 3158 Mission St.

Thursdays

Free Tenant's Rights Counseling — Don't roll over when comes down to a landlord's pursuit of profit versus your right to keep on living in da hood. 6-8pm at Cafe La Boheme, 24th & Mission. For more info, call 398-6200

Bluegrass — Every Thursday at the Atlas Cafe, jam on every last Thur. open to all! 7:30-10 pm. 3049 20th St. 648-1047.

Arabian Nights — At El Rio. Dance music from the Arab world and free belly dance class at 8:30. \$4. 3158 Mission.

Fridays

SF Games — Healthy alternative way to meet people—over Scrabble! Now meeting at Muddy's Coffeehouse, 1304 Valencia @24th St. 7 pm to Midnight.

Saturdays

Family Storytime — 11 am English/12 noon Espanol. Short craft activity. 300 Bartlett al 24th St., Mission Branch Library. 695-5090.

Live Music — Skiffle, swing, ragtime or bluegrass to be found live at Atlas cafe every Saturday, 4-7 pm. 3049 20th St. @Alabama.

Sundays

Salsa Dance Class — 3:15 pm at El Rio, followed by live Salsa. \$7. Latin/Souf dance music, 8pm, no cover. 3158 Mission.

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No tickets or coupons necessary! Just bring a driver's license or utility bill to show your zip code.

Open every day. For information: (415) 750-7145 or [www.calacademy.org](http://www.calacademy.org)

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Sunset Scavenger Co. 330-1315 (Free Service)  
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## Letters to the Editor

Editor,

I am writing regarding your article in the August, 1999 issue of New Mission News in which I was misquoted by you as saying "We've known there was a problem since 1995 but getting information from them has been problematic. When we went out on our site visits we found they were providing adequate services even above and beyond what the contract called for."

First, I did indicate that we, at the Mayor's Criminal Justice Council (MCJC), have known about RAP's fiscal situation, however we were alerted to their

situation in late 1997 after reviewing their 1995-96 Audited Financial Statements which revealed revenue under expenditures (deficits) totaling \$71,914. Second, the context in which the second statement was presented did not convey the sentiment I was making to you. Although I did say, "RAP had been providing adequate services even above and beyond what the contract called for," the statement was taken out of context. I told you that RAP's practice of taking on projects they had not been requested to and for which they had no funding is what led them in part to the situation that they are in today. Their efforts at providing these services sometimes came into sharp contrast to what MCJC was authorizing as allowable expenses. Thank you for noting these clarifications.

Sincerely,

Eugene Clendinen, Fiscal Director,  
Mayor's Criminal Justice Council

## Miracle Mile Makers

MISSION MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

MISSION MERCHANT  
ASSOCIATION

### GENERAL MEETING

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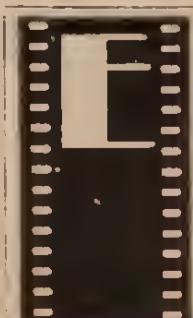
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The Mission's newest dance club is the Twenty-Six Mix, located on Mission Street near Cesar Chavez, catty corner from the Tip Top. This spacious soundbar, a great sound system and great cocktails, has plenty of room to dance to Hip Hop, House, and Bass and Drum music spun by djs nightly. On Wednesday nights Mr. Brown presents This and That: both djayed and live music performed by groups such as Felonius, Foreign Legion and Most Chill Slack Mob. Last month the club featured a live Internet broadcast by X-Radio of a dj battle between Felix Da' Dog and Ammon. For the eye there's a rotating "street art" show (art influenced by graffiti and wall posters). For the nerves there's a full bar.

Twenty-Six Mix at 3024 Mission Street is open every day from 8pm to 2am. Call 248-1319 for more information or check out their web site at [www.26mix.com](http://www.26mix.com)

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Loco Bloco performed at the Brava! Youth Festival. Photo by Michele Munn

## Brava Youth Festival

Sixty budding young actors, writers, musicians, poets, and dancers from the Bay Area converged on 24th Street on Sunday, August 22, to celebrate the first-ever Brava! Youth Festival. Youth Speak, a spoken-word group, gave poetry readings. Loco Bloco's percussionists got the crowd up and dancing in the afternoon light. Omulu Capoeira's 'warrior artists' whirled about the stage, captivating the audience with their athletic grace. The festival's highlight was two performances of *Mariposa: The Journey Home* by Teatro Armonia, the Mission's own youth theater troupe.

Teatro Armonia, a division of Brava! Theater Academy, hopes to prevent gang violence by encouraging young people to 'arm themselves with the power of words'. Each summer, approximately 30 low-income, inner-city youth collaboratively write and stage their own play, under the tutelage of Teatro Armonia's local and professional artists. This summer's play evoked the theme of home; defining it, leaving it, and finding it as envisioned by

the 28 young playwrights in the program.

Andrea Thome, Acting Instructor for Teatro Armonia, said "I always learn something from them [the students]. They have a raw and incredibly clear eye for perceiving the world around them, often more so than a professional writer. They often remind me of what's true and important and they are not afraid to say things or notice things, which make them powerful as actors and writers."

Jaime Miranda, speaking about his experience in the program said, "They [the instructors] took our ideas and embraced them. All these characters [in the play] were like a puzzle to our own past. In my personal life I was having a hard time. But this helped me get through it, because I was so concentrated on my character and the creative process."

Brava! will expand the Teatro Armonia program to offer it year-round, thus bringing the joy of the theater to even more youth in our city.

Michele Munn

## Health at Home

Caring for patients with life threatening, chronic, or disabling diseases such as HIV, cancer, and chemical dependencies is no easy feat. Health at Home, a public health agency established in 1997, does just that. And, says Health at Home Volunteer/Development Coordinator Pat Bregant, "We see San Francisco's most needy... people who don't have insurance, people who are underinsured, people who are undocumented."

A bevy of dedicated registered nurses, physical and occupational therapists, social workers, home health aides, and volunteers comprise the Home Health Team. They make 18,000 care-giving visits each year, serving 170-200 patients at any given time.

Bregant estimates 25% of their clients are living with HIV, and 25% have "end-stage" diagnoses, such as cancer, meaning they are dealing with end of life issues. The remaining 50% of their patients have chronically disabling illnesses, which render them homebound. "We get them up

and available to go to the doctor," says Bregant.

One coup for Health at Home since its inception two years ago was to qualify for Ryan White federal funding for HIV patients as a public agency. The grants traditionally go to the private sector. Winning this grant allowed the agency to recently take on 15 additional low-income patients.

Says Bregant, "I came from the private sector, and I really have to say, the care here is amazing. There's a real commitment by people in this organization to maintain people in their home the way they want to be maintained, not to look the other way or forget about them (the patients)."

Health at Home will conduct volunteer training sessions in mid-September at its 45 Onondaga Avenue office. For more information, please contact Pat Bregant, Volunteer/Development Coordinator, at (415) 452-2100.

Michele Munn



## St. Luke's Family Health Center

On Saturday, August 28, St. Luke's Hospital celebrated the opening of a new Family Health Center at 3085 24th Street, between Treat and Folsom. There were games and a clown for the kids. Mayor Willie Brown performed the ribbon cutting honors and spoke briefly about the status of health care in the Mission. The community also met and heard from Dr. Victor Villacorta, MD, who spoke of his connection and commitment to the Mission. Besides lots of free medical information, activities, prizes, and edible goodies, there was the unveiling of Health Wise, a collaborative youth mural project. The mural was designed by twenty people ages 4-24 and depicts some of the ways we can be cared for and make ourselves feel better.

St. Luke's new Family Health Center features the Children's Medical Program

(CHDP) which provides free health care to uninsured children up to age 19 and covers most immunizations, school and sports physicals, anemia testing, lead testing, and check-ups. They also offer treatment for asthma, diabetes, and hypertension.

Other low cost health care programs include Healthy Families, for children 1-19 years old; Pre-emptive Eligibility (PE), emergency prenatal care; Family Pact; The Breast Cancer Early Detection Program, and AIM, for pregnant women and their newborns.

St. Luke's Family Health Center accepts most types of health insurance policies. To find out if you qualify for free or low cost health care programs offered at St. Luke's Family Health Center, call (415) 647-8111. For free assistance in applying for other free or low cost health care programs offered at St. Luke's Health Care Center at 1640 Valencia Street, call Community Health Aides at (415) 282-2900.

Agencies provide bilingual counseling, advocacy, and referrals for almost 500 women each year. Peer support groups and individual children's counseling are also available. Volunteers to the Center provide emotional support to shelter residents and coordinate children's programs.

What challenges does the Riley Center face? "We are growing bigger, and need more space. Also, we need more community involvement, because a shelter is not the answer for everyone, and when someone goes to a shelter over and over again, if the abusers don't change, and the community doesn't take responsibility..." says Hart, "then it becomes a threat to the woman. Part of the reason we have the volunteer program is to get community members involved and more aware of domestic violence."

The Riley Center is located at 3543 18th Street #4. Training for program volunteers begins September 13th. For more information contact Maya Hart at (415) 552-2943.

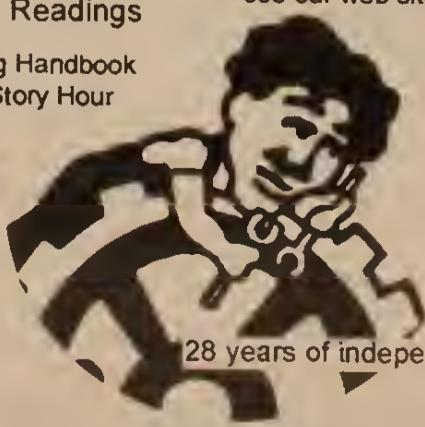
Michele Munn

## modern times bookstore

### September Readings

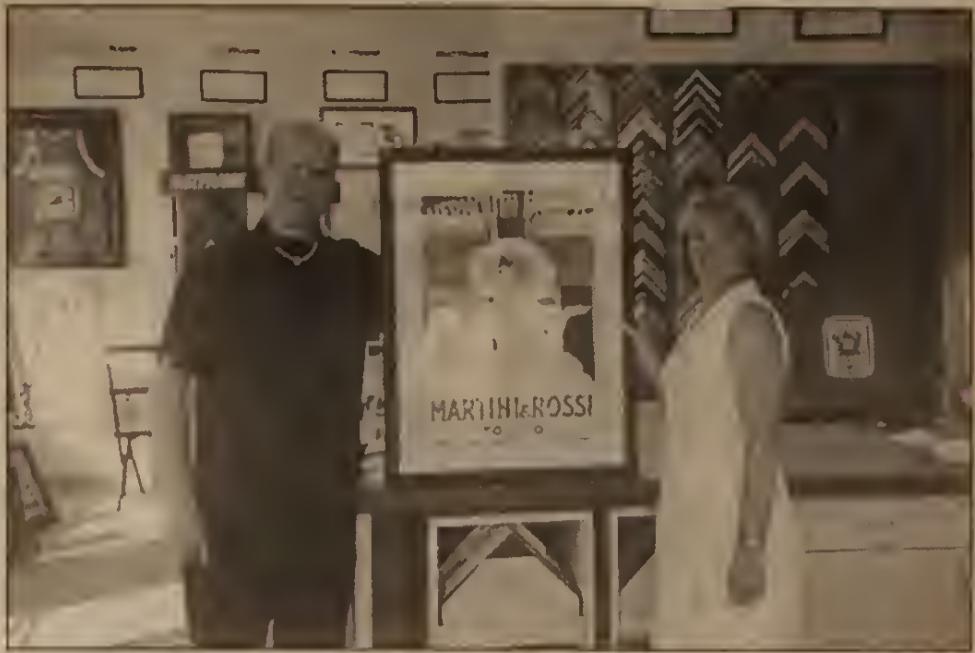
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## Framed!

On August 28, owner Jean La Douceur and manager Trent Woods held their grand opening celebration for Fast

Frame, a picture framing establishment located at 695 San Jose Ave. With the concentration of galleries, studios and art lovers in the Mission, they should do very well.

## Have you seen her, la Misión?

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## Ben Dominguez master of expressionist color

By Mario Joel

Upon entering the Noe Valley residence of artist Ben Dominguez, visitors are immediately drawn to the paintings that cover the walls in every room – literally from floor to ceiling. The collection spans the entire range of creative expression that Dominguez has achieved during his 40-year self-taught artistic career.

There is a series of California landscapes that Dominguez painted in his youth which were influenced by *naïve* art. In these he creates an atmosphere where the viewer finds spaces inhabited with expectation, where anything might happen within the time-span of a short story. Each one seemingly depicts the perfect setting for the romance one expects to find hidden deep within the California soil. Along with these are many exotic studies and urban scenes of San Francisco that Dominguez created during his neo-impressionism stage. Through the colors of impressionism he vividly recreated the essence of transmitting feelings and rhythmic fluidity and surrendered into the canvas his inner Latino passion.

Reflecting on these paintings, I can easily see how he became absorbed in illustrating San Francisco's characteristic scenery. I recognize his intentions as motivated by natural inspiration, through his experience of mastering the formulas of art Dominguez communicates a sense of movement in his creations. His canvases are filled with landscapes of the urban environment, community parks and Victorian houses that are illuminated with hallucinatory oil-based colors - the principal medium that allows him to openly communicate his sense of freedom of expression.

"I feel that I'm engaged in the act of perceiving the beauty of San Francisco, with its multitudes involved with their dreams and realities." Says Dominguez, "Where the different languages of art travel

through dimensions of the street... with its scenes of hills, antennas, towers, church steeples and pyramidal banking houses... its corners of paradise and Victorian architecture are an endless source of inspiration to me."

These paintings, with their brilliant colors, are able to transmit the immensity of centuries-old traditions in architecture, with recognizable landmarks as background. "I love to create imaginary scenes where I can experiment with color and perspective; depicting hundreds of streets, houses, palaces and the neighborhood of our city," Dominguez said, "I'm transforming the images through the magic of art, recreating the history of these Catholic Jesuit cathedrals in San Francisco."

Other images were achieved by converting the drawings and studies he produced while Dominguez was stationed in Japan as a member of the U.S. Air Force. Working in oils, he sublimated these powerful influences that narrate the history and humorous moments that are represented within them. There are the faces of the pilots, the blue uniforms of the servicemen, the clouds of a skull-like form mocking life in the horizon, the downing of planes, and enemy bombardments. When Dominguez was discharged from the service, he returned to California and his work often assumed a definite tone of humor, such as in a series in which Richard Nixon is the central figure, projected in every form imaginable.

For Dominguez, narrating the sequences of his art is a proud moment. For the viewer, it is easy to share the admiration that this son of San Francisco has inspired in so many.

*The cover illustration for this issue is an example of a pictorial work by Ben Dominguez, which captures the spirit of the Mission.*

Translation by Alfonso Texidor.

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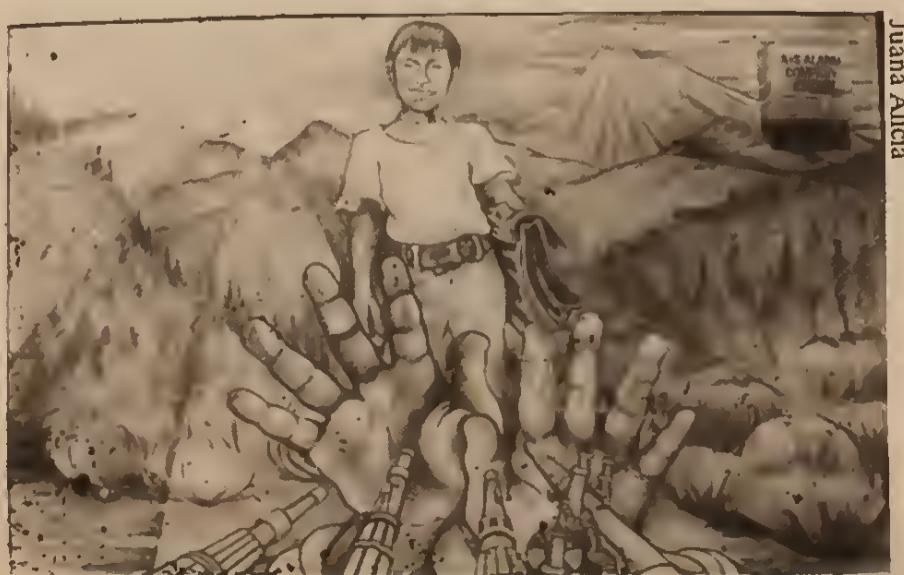
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Activists Helen Rodriguez and Carlos Gomez paste over an AIDS drug ad targeting Latinos.

**An open letter to the Latino community about AIDS****Question:** If AIDS is an "epidemic," as authorities would have us believe, then why after fifteen years of the "HIV VIRUS" does this so-called epidemic continue to disproportionately affect marginalized people?**Answer:** Because AIDS is not a viral epidemic.

Viral epidemics affect general populations without regard to class, race or sexual preference. This is an important point for the Latino community to think about, as we are currently being targeted by the pharmaceutical industry as a potential market. Glaxo Wellcome and other nefarious pharmaceutical corporations, having devastated the gay community with toxic poisons like AZT, a chemotherapeutic carcinogen that killed tens of thousands of gay men and other HIV positives at the end of the 1980s, are now moving into the Latino community. The same generic ads for toxic poisons such as Ziagen and Combivir now appear in the bus stops and billboards of the Latino barrios of the Mission and the Lower East Side just as they have in the gay neighborhoods of the Castro and Chelsea. Targeting minority communities for profit is nothing new. However, endangering the lives of healthy people for profit is criminal and people should be aware of the sham campaign promoted in the name of health care.

At a time when social services and adequate health care are simply unavailable it is important to question the motives of corporate agencies pushing drugs upon a frightened and confused public. People should be outraged that these corporations make billions of dollars at the public's expense. We are told there isn't any money

for social services and housing while AIDS industry officials help themselves to the public coffers, squandering needed finances for drugs that don't work. This has made a few AIDS foundation bureaucrats rich, but does nothing to further the interests of the millions of people in need.

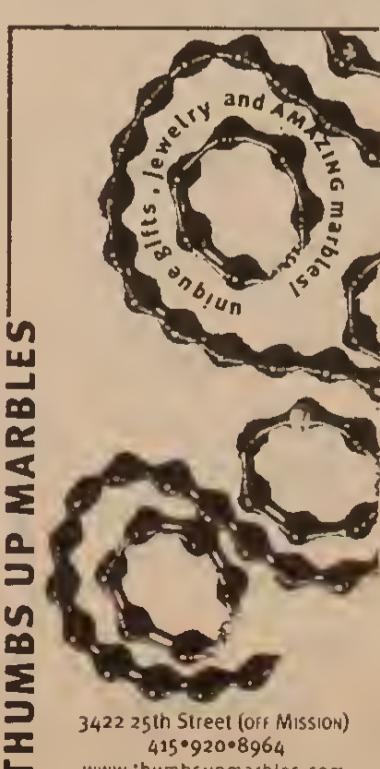
The AIDS Industry will soon face a federal audit and the fight for a sound public health care policy is more urgent than ever. When it comes to the subject of AIDS, logic, clear thinking and basic common sense vanish into arcane language of doublespeak. There is no epidemic except for the epidemic of lies that prop up the mirage of AIDS. AIDS itself is not a disease but a composite of some 29 diseases that have always existed. Officially the definition of AIDS has changed three times: in 1987, 1991 and 1993 to include people with no symptoms of illness. In the beginning of the HIV hypotheses we were told we had three to four years to live, then seven, now fifteen.

However, the point of the inaccuracy of the HIV test is crucial because the test was revised to include people with no symptoms of illness. Whether you test positive or not, the test reacts to a variety of anti-bodies secreted by your immune system for a number of reasons. Pregnant women, patients with a history of hepatitis, STDs, bacterial and viral infections, even the presence of stress in an individual's life can all create a positive result. And all that means is that you have tested positive for the anti-bodies. In other words your immune system is working.

The official lies continue but the truth is people can live healthy lives if they eat right, get plenty of rest, stay away from both antiretrovirals and recreational drugs and most importantly don't buy into the HIV = death equation.

The question of maintaining a healthy lifestyle is fundamental in the prevention of AIDS, which brings us to the sociological issues surrounding AIDS. The likely candidates for drug abuse, alcoholism, depression and other social health problems are those who experience the adverse effects of racism, poverty, homophobia; who's educational chances dwindle at the drop of a politician's hat, or who are hard pressed for basic needs like housing and food costs. Whether we are talking about AIDS in Africa or AIDS in San Francisco the common issues of housing, healthcare and basic nutrition are essential. If the West were truly interested in ending AIDS in Africa, the world community would work to end hunger in Africa. Nothing short of a complete transformation of our values as a world community will end AIDS in the barrio or in Africa.

Ronnie Burk  
Helen Rodriguez For ACT UP/SF

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## Life is good in the espresso lane

By Esther Rosenfeld

**S**omeone very close to me recently commented that "although you can be too thin and too rich, you can never have too many bookstores and cafes."

I admit that when Cafe Espresso Bravo first opened its doors in May of '98, I was one of the skeptical minions muttering, "do we *really* need yet another cafe in the Mission?"

But I've been won over. Not because of the full coffee bar, tasty sandwiches or wide selection of baked goodies. Not because of the friendly service, or special veggie offerings, or even the constant stock of decadent, chocolate-coated halvah bars, that bring back sticky-sweet childhood memories.

The spacious interior, plentiful tables, comfy chairs and sofas are great, but Espresso Bravo is offering something most cafes overlook - a showcase for local talent. Espresso Bravo displays local artists' works with exhibits changing monthly and features an ongoing live music series on Friday and Saturday evenings, and much more.

Owner Sam Alkhraisat, who radiates warmth and hospitality, envisions his space as a food-and-entertainment forum featuring local artists. Sam plans to serve such standard favorites as hamburgers, "a few good salads," french fries, and assorted crepes for lunch. Dinner fare will include appetizer food: chicken wings, caesar salad, and soups. Think happy hour. Think *tapas*, American-diner style. A beer and wine re-sale permit is pending.

Recently, the folk-rock band Triple O Joy played and according to one band member "There were plenty of people in and out all night. It's a great space." Triple O Joy hopes to play there again in the near future.

Asked what kind of music he favors, Sam responded that he defers to the tastes of his customers. "I'm not good in music; I ask my customers for their opinion. I get

the (demo tape/CD) and play it here, and they tell me how they like it." As for his own preferences? "I like anything, as long as it's not too much loud or crazy," he said with a twinkly-eyed laugh. (He does confess to a soft spot for jazz).

Every Tuesday night Espresso Bravo hosts a "Philosophy Show," when between fifteen to thirty philosophically minded people gather to weigh in on topics ranging from the nature of good and evil to the viability of life after death. These weekly Socratic sessions began over a year ago when teacher and tech writer Chris Phillips initiated what he calls "Socrates Cafes" in various Bay Area locales. Phillips' mission was to rescue philosophical inquiry from the stale strictures of academia and bring it back to the people. Although Phillips no longer attends the weekly meetings at Espresso Bravo, his legacy lives on.

"You can ask (the facilitator) a question, and he will answer it. He can talk about anything," Sam said. "If you don't like the answer, you can keep asking, and he will keep talking." (Sounds like a lot of people I know).

"People use the cafe as a meeting place, too," said Sam. Every Thursday, the non-profit group Food Not Bombs meets here, and on Sundays, there is a DJ who plays funk. Also, Espresso Bravo has a small (yet pleasingly bizarre) lending library. If you have any books you're finished with, "you can come here and pick a new one and leave your old one on the shelf," said Sam.

Oh - the food. The pastries, while nothing out of the cafe-ordinary, provide good, standard accompaniment to your hot beverage choice. The tea selection is impressive. The breakfast bagel, a triple whopper of solid cholesterol (eggs, butter, cheese), will keep you going until lunch. And, of course, there's the aforementioned halva.

Espresso Bravo Cafe is located at 663 Valencia Street. Hours are Monday-Thursday, 7am-11pm, Friday and Saturday, 7am-12pm, and Sunday, 8am-11pm.



Cafe Espresso Bravo also has sunny outside tables.

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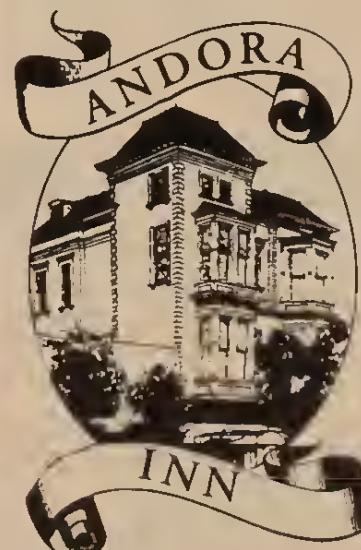
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# Library Lady



You have questions - she has answers.

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-Bibliophiles on Bartlett

Dear Bs on B, Library Lady can see that you have quite a dilemma! First of all she wants to say that the library welcomes donations! Read on...

LL Step # 1 For Donations, here's how it works: when books are donated to the library, the library adds any books that it can use to the collection. Books that aren't added to the Library's collection are given to the Friends and Foundation of the Library to sell at their book sales. Money raised through the book sales goes to support Library programs, so in the end your donation serves you and everybody else too! Your books don't need pedigrees - or papers and shots-they'll be judged on their own merits! The library can't integrate loose magazines or textbooks into the collection but paperbacks in good condition, as well as hardbacks, definitely augment the collection.

LL Step # 2 Keep the books and give up the house? How about a reality check? Searching the San Francisco Chronicle/Examiner web site <http://www.sfgate.com>, Library Lady found a variety of rentals available in SF. But of course word has it that finding a new home in SF is difficult, right?

Now read on for another way to consider the problem.

LL Step #3 Library Lady guesses that this might be a question to be considered philosophically as well. Off the top of her

head, she can't think of a sagacious quote on the relative importance of books vs. shelter. However, consulting volumes on quotations here at the Mission Branch, she finds these pearls of wisdom:

In 1855, Sydney Smith had this to say about homes with books: "No furniture so charming as books." We found it in The International Thesaurus of Quotations, New York: HarperPerennial, 1996, (Dewey Decimal number 82 In85 1996-Reference).

Centuries ago, Cicero also opined that books make the room, he said: "A room without books is a body without a soul." The multicultural Dictionary of Proverbs by Harold V. Cordry, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 1997, (Dewey Decimal number 82 C812m-Reference).

On the other hand, Hazel Rochman had this perspective: "Reading makes immigrants of us all. It takes us away from home, but more important, it finds homes for us everywhere." We found this on the web by using the search term "quotations" and narrowing it with "books."

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## Mission Youth Soccer League holds 7th annual league finals

The Mission Youth Soccer League (MYS) held its 7th annual league finals at Boxer Stadium (formerly Balboa) on August 14th and 21st. Seventy-two teams with more than 900 youth participants practiced and played 3-4 times a week for two months vying for a place in the MYS 1999 finals. The Kellogg Corporation in cooperation with the SF Recreation & Parks Dept. and Soccer in the Streets gave away hundreds of toys and provided entertainment and soccer demonstrations. And at the end of the finals, more than 300 children went home with trophies!

MYS has been in existence for nearly 8 years, providing disadvantaged youth with an opportunity to develop a more

positive self-image, receive tutorial support, and learn sportsmanship, teamwork and cooperation. They currently have 60 teams with more than 750 boys and girls ages 4-18 enrolled and playing in CYSA affiliated leagues throughout the Bay Area. MYS provides 10 supervised hours of soccer practice and games per week on a year round basis; with an annual budget of less than \$60,000 - roughly 20 cents per client. This includes liability and medical insurance, coaches, referees, uniforms & equipment, and registration and tournament fees as well as training and certification for refs and coaches. Parent volunteers make up nearly all of MYS's coaching staff.

Andy Solow

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# Health Matters



**Richard Pitt**

## PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

We live in an era fraught with complex decisions, which affect our health. Quality of food, working and living environments, stress; they all take their toll on our systems and more than ever we need to pay attention to what is happening inside and outside of our bodies. Certain diseases seem to be products of the era we live in and it has been questioned how these diseases can be avoided. Breast cancer is one such disease. It is written that more than two-thirds of women with breast cancer have estrogen-dependent cancers. It seems that the average woman is exposed to more estrogen over a longer period of time than ever before.

The following suggestions may be useful in helping both maintain overall health and also to minimize the possibility of breast cancer:

1. Maintain a healthy weight. Obesity increases the risk of post menopausal breast cancer by 50 to 100 per cent.

2. Stick to a low fat, high fiber diet. Cut down on animal fat, it can accumulate pesticides and other contaminants.

3. Avoid non-organic dairy products. If milk has been taken from cows that have been grazing near Nuclear power plants, byproducts such as Strontium 90 get into the milk through the grass and water the cows take in. This has been shown to have an effect on the incidence of breast cancer.

4. Eat organic whole foods and organic, free-range meat. Studies have shown that a pesticide poses a breast cancer risk by acting as a pseudo-estrogen. Non-organic meat and milk are also full of growth-boosting hormones and pesticides.

5. Eat deep-sea fish, which is less likely to be polluted with pesticides and other carcinogenic industrial wastes than fresh-water fish.

6. Limit alcohol, which causes estrogen levels to rise sharply.

7. Don't smoke.

8. Avoid drinking tap water, it may contain industrial carcinogens.

9. Consume unprocessed soy foods, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, olive oil, garlic, carotenoids (carrots, squash, and sweet potatoes), vitamin E and selenium-rich foods.

10. Take moderate regular exercise.

These are some good suggestions that all of us should generally adhere to. Obviously we can't be too fanatical about any health or diet regime, but as the need to combat the consequence of environmental hazards grow we have to be aware of what we can do to protect ourselves against diseases as devastating as cancer.

*Richard Pitt is a health educator and is Director of the Pacific Academy of Homeopathy. He can be reached at (415) 695-8200.*

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## New Mission Nudes

The reception for "Nude in August", a showing of 25 nudes by local artists also featured nude artist Elwood Miller and a nude musician who insisted his name was Chris Bare. The event was held at CityArt

Cooperative Gallery on Valencia Street but judging from the above photo Southern Exposure might have been a more appropriate venue. Photo by Michael Kushner

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# Poems of the Month

edited by La Huerfana

## JUST DON'T

Don't you dare  
tell the stars  
how much you really love them  
'cause they fade away

Don't you dare  
tell the sea  
of the beauties that she holds  
'cause she'll dry out

Live happiness  
all the way down to the edge  
but don't name it  
'cause it will vanish

chito © 15 Nov 98

silent cruciform  
your hands  
the body of Christ  
When you hung yourself  
from the water tower  
the whole town talked about it  
for days...  
Back in Chihuahuita  
the woman that you loved  
danced till dawn with the other man  
The woman  
that you were loving  
danced till dawn with  
the other one  
The woman that you love  
danced till dawn  
with the whiter man

La Huerfana © 1999

## NO

No digas a las estrellas  
lo mucho que las quieres  
porque se apagan

No le hables a la mar  
de las bellezas que ella guarda  
porque se seca

Vive la felicidad hasta el desborde  
mas no la nombres  
porque se esfuma.

chito © 15 Nov 98

## Tío

Felipe, Tio con piel cobriza  
como lo que agarran de la tierra  
debajo Morenci  
Uncle, retrato, nacido por otro lado  
niño de alguno antepasado  
mirada en un lente capturado  
sin sonriente  
apologético  
Rodeado por los demás  
Banda de Mariachi  
ellos huelean a festival  
pero tu estás perdido en música extraña  
imaginado entre sombras  
de química y papel  
violín y aro en reposo  
silenciosa cruciforma  
tus manos  
el cuerpo de Cristo  
Cuando te ahorcaste  
desde la torre de agua  
Todo el pueblo lo siguió comentando  
días después...  
Mientras tanto allí en Chihuahuita  
la mujer que has querido  
bailaba hasta el amanecer con el otro  
La mujer  
que tu querías  
bailaba hasta el amanecer  
con él otro  
La mujer que quieres  
bailaba hasta el amanecer  
con otro más güero

La Huerfana © 1999

## Uncle

Felipe, Uncle with copper skin  
like the stuff they grab from the earth  
bcneath Morenci  
Tio, photograph, born on the other side  
some ancestors child  
lens-captured stare  
unsmiling  
apologetic  
Surrounded by the others  
Mariachi band  
they reek of festival  
but you are lost in strange music  
imagined inside shadows  
of chemical and paper  
violin and bow resting

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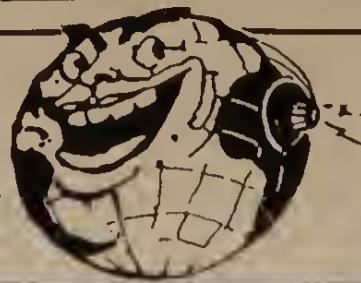
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# Round World Music Review



Robert Leaver



## Llegó Van Van

**L**os Van Van from Cuba, undoubtedly the most popular Cuban dance band over the last twenty plus years, return to the Bay Area. Many of us remember the truly magical show they played their first time here a couple of years ago at the Maritime Hall. That show lasted over four hours and had everyone dancing from first to last note. They've always been a live-performance powerhouse, featuring several great singers, a killer rhythm section, trombones, violins, and flute. A band who has always been inventive; they are the essence of modern Cuban dance music.

Their new recording *Llegó Van Van* (Van Van has arrived) comes out in September and promises to be on par with the last two great records, *Ay Dios, Ampárame* and *Te Pone La Cabeza Mala*. Famous throughout Latin America for their Pan-American Hit *Muevete*, they have been massive in Europe and Japan since the eighties and are now back to conquer the Bay Area. They play a 30-year retrospective show at Masonic Hall, September 15, and at the Mountain Winery in Saratoga on the 16th. They will also be at the Monterey Jazz Festival on the 17th (featuring the virtuoso Cuban pianist Chucho Valdés and his jazz group), and at Palookaville in Santa Cruz, which has a great dance floor, on Saturday September 18.

On our local Cuban scene the great Cuban percussionist Jesús Diaz and his dance band QBA have an excellent CD out entitled *Caramelo*. They play a hard-hitting style of contemporary Cuban Salsa and Timba, as well as some straight folkloric tracks. The band features the funky bass of Rahsaan Fredericks and a killer horn section with arrangements by Wayne Wallace, and Jesús' rumba-inflected vocals. Check for live shows at the Elbo Room on Valencia Street.

Also appearing live in our barrio this month are a couple of renowned Cuban groups. Sintesis is a Cuban band that combines Afro-Cuban folklore with rock. Their *Ancestros* recordings from some years back were among the first to fuse these distinct styles. Francisco Aguabella, the legendary Cuban drummer who has had mythic status here on the West Coast

jazz scene since the sixties, will bring his Latin Jazz group to the Elbo Room, September 23, and Sintesis will perform there on the 16th.

New releases of note include a collection titled *Onda Sonora: Red, Hot & Lisbon*. This CD features an amazing array of collaborations among African, Brazilian, European, and American Musicians including David Byrne, Caetano Veloso, Ketama (a flamenco group from Spain with an all women's drumming group), Djavan from Brazil, Angola's haunting vocalist, Bonga with Brazilian diva Marisa Monte, and Bahia's funkiest Carlinhos Brown. Country singer K.D. Lang sings a respectable traditional Portuguese mournful *fado*. Also in the mix are DJ's Spooky, Soul Slinger & Wally, and Durutti Column. This is the most diverse of the Red Hot series and nearly all of the music is dance floor friendly.

International African music star Youssou N'Dour has a solid new CD release *Spécial fin d'année plus*. This CD was recorded at his studio in Senegal and includes a full battery of drums and a tight rhythm section that propels the music and would-be dancers. Youssou's voice accents and soars with total command complemented by chorus singers and tasteful electric guitar. His European produced records always tried to soften his hard-hitting style of music but in Senegal he rocks.

Also from West Africa: a series of classic recording releases from Guinea entitled *Discotheque 70-74*. Originally released on the state record company when Guinea was a hard core socialist state, they document an important transition period in modern African music. As in neighboring Mali, with whom they share much culturally, this modern music was heavily influenced by Cuban music and rock.

Cuban music was looked at as a modern sophisticated form of African derived music. The horn sections are particularly derivative although the Africans were looser about playing in a precise tuning. Guinea became famous for its' singers and guitarists, who are regarded as being among the fastest and most harmonically sophisticated. Tradition was transmuted into a new universal form and the shape of modern West African music was changed forever.

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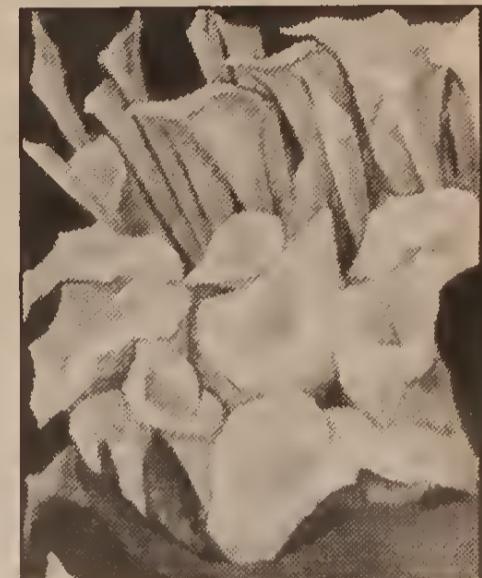
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